

Serial No. 10/528,312  
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Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A method for generating and/or validating electronic signatures, the method comprising:

generating an asymmetrical key pair which includes a private signature key and a public validation key;

calculating an electronic signature for an electronic document by means of the private signature key and by applying a predetermined signature function; and

| performing a certification of the public validation key wherein, when validating, only those signatures generated at a time prior to the certification of the public validation key are recognized as valid.

7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 6, wherein, when certifying the public validation key, a reference to the electronic document is included in addition to a user identifier and the public validation key.

9. (canceled)

10. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 8, wherein an implementation of the reference is performed by a calculation of a hash value for the electronic document.

11. (canceled)

Serial No. 10/528,312  
Atty. Doc. No. 2002P15289WOUS

12. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 6, wherein, following calculation of the signature and prior to its transfer to a recipient, a validation is performed by an author of the electronic document, in order to verify an action of intent which is expressed by the electronic document.

13. (canceled)

14. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 8, wherein, following calculation of the signature and prior to its transfer to a recipient, a validation is performed by an author of the electronic document, in order to verify an action of intent which is expressed by the electronic document.

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 10, wherein, following calculation of the signature and prior to its transfer to a recipient, a validation is performed by an author of the electronic document, in order to verify an action of intent which is expressed by the electronic document.

17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) A method for generating and/or validating electronic signatures, the method comprising:

generating an asymmetrical key pair which includes a private signature key and a public validation key;

calculating at least one electronic signature for at least one electronic document by means of the private signature key and by applying a predeterminable signature function; and

following calculation of the electronic signature, of which there is at least one, carrying out a certification of the public validation key wherein only those signatures generated at a time prior to the certification of the public validation key are recognized as valid.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 18, wherein, when certifying the public validation key, at least one reference to the electronic document, of which there is at least one, is included in addition to a user identifier and the public validation key.

21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 20, wherein an implementation of the reference, of which there is at least one, takes place by means of a calculation of a hash value for the electronic document, of which there is at least one.

23. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 18, wherein, following calculation of the signature and prior to its transfer to a recipient, a validation is performed by an author of the electronic document, of which there is at least one, in order to verify an action of intent which is expressed by the electronic document, of which there is at least one.